

HUMAN RIGHTS IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Every human being has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. The framers of our constitution made that clear in the Bill of Rights. The United Nations affirmed this in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights enacted in 1948. Ensuring human rights is everyone's responsibility including governments, societies and individuals.

The Austin Human Rights Commission (HRC) has the local responsibility to help safeguard the legal and social rights of all members of our community, but the HRC doesn't act alone. Every day individuals, groups and organizations in our area are striving for justice, peace, tolerance and understanding. We are all partners in this endeavor.

The HRC is currently accepting nominations from the public for the names of individuals, groups or organizations that have made an outstanding contribution to ensuring human rights and promoting humanitarian goals. Nominees are then considered as potential recipients of the prestigious Human Rights Award presented by the HRC.

Award nominations may be made for a broad spectrum of activities including advocacy for children and women, interracial understanding, economic opportunity, community diversity and other humanitarian efforts.

Many outstanding members of the community have been recognized in the past. The earliest recipient was Ross Graves, 1984; then Amis Austin 1986; Robert Qual and Edward Bork 1987; Al Mayotte 1994; Kathy Skjeveland 1999; Sue Grove 2000; Pat Piper 2001; Virginia Larsen 2002; Father Paul Nelson 2003; and Maryanne Law in 2004.

Nomination forms are available at the Austin Public Library, City of Austin website at www.ci.austin.mn.us or by calling 437-9942. Completed nomination forms should be sent to City of Austin, 500 Fourth Avenue NW, Austin. Nominations should include a statement about why the nominee should receive the award and examples that show a commitment to human rights and dignity. Nominations will be received through March 12, 2007.